— Availability of trained manpower pool to work in extreme cold, harsh and isolated conditions have been generated from the expeditions.

— The Indian Navy and Air Force by virtue of their participation in the expeditions have gained professional expertise of the highest order in snow-ice navigation under adverse climatic conditions.

Comparative Poverty Position

*370. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the assessment of the Ministry with regard to rural poverty in June, 1991 and June, 1995, State-wise; and

(b) the basis of arriving at such conclusions?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (DR. JAGANNATH MISHRA): (a) and (b) The Ministry of Rural Areas and Employment do not make assessment of rural poverty in the country. Such assessment of incidence of poverty in the rural areas is done by Planning Commission and the latest estimates of incidence of rural poverty relate to 1987-88 based on 43rd round of NSSO.

Warning Given by Doctors on Supreme Court Verdict

*371. SHRI N. GIRI PRASAD:
SHRI CHATURANAN MISHRA:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to refer to the answer to Unstarred Question 546 given in the Rajya Sabha on 30th November, 1995 and state:

(a) whether it is a fact that several prominent doctors have warned that the verdict of Supreme Court would herald the era of defensive practice in medicine throughout the country resulting in escalated cost of treatment; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and what is Government's reaction to the verdict and the warning given by doctors thereon?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. R. ANTULAY): (a) and (b) It has been reported in national dailies that some doctors have opined that the result of the order of the apex court would increase the cost of treatment and lead to practice of defensive madicine by doctors. It is also reported that this apprehension has not been shared by other. the order of the Supreme Court is binding on doctors/ hospitals rendering service for consideration. Its implication on Government hospitals charging fully or partially is being examined.

Lok Pal Bill

*372. SHRI RAGHAVJI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to introduce a Bill for creation of Lok Pal the next Session of the Parliament; and

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SMT. MARGARET ALVA): (a) and (b) The Government held announced earlier that it would come forward with a comprehensive Bill on Lokpal after the political parties and leaders had discussed and arrived at a consensus. Efforts to evolve a broad consensus are already on.

PSU Disinvestment Policy

*373. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact the Government are pursuing the PSU disinvestment policy in a luke-warm pace;

(b) whether the PSU disinvestment